



Committee: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Country: The Swiss Confederation

Agenda: Developing flood resistance, emergency response and disaster risk reduction framework in South East Asia

As one of the substantial contributors to various development programmes conducted by the United Nations Development Programme, the Swiss Confederation recognizes the prevailing situation of flood crisis and disaster risk management in Southeast Asian countries as a grave issue that is causing impediments in the pathway towards development for many countries. The Swiss Confederation is one of the ten largest foreign direct investors to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Swiss companies had invested around CHF 40 billion in ASEAN countries by the end of 2019. This figure was CHF 2.3 billion in the year 1995. A big portion of Swiss citizens reside in ASEAN countries. An essential part of Switzerland's foreign policy is to expand the engagement with Asia and with Asian regional associations, and ASEAN is an exemplary platform for exchange between nations, advancing international norms and standards and address global issues at regional level. Due to all such reasons, the Swiss Confederation considers the topic of discussion to be very crucial.

With a Progress Score of 4.8 as per the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), Switzerland is a world leader for being one of the best nations at reducing disaster risks. The country has invested large funds in formulating early warning systems that forecast potential threats such as landslides, avalanches and floods. A system of isolation channels which are able to stream heavy rain or melting snow has been established in the major mountain ranges here, which safeguards Swiss villages and towns against flooding. Switzerland is globally acclaimed for its expertise in DRR. In Switzerland, the SDC is strengthening its collaboration with other units in the Federal Administration to convey this knowledge to its partner countries. The country has also formed alliances with the Federal Office for the Environment, the Federal Office for Civil Protection and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), as well as a number of NGOs, the private sector, various universities and the Swiss National Platform for Natural Hazards (PLANAT).

Till now, the United Nations has taken multiple steps and actions to mitigate the crucial crisis of floods and other natural calamities; be it in Southeast Asian countries or absolutely any country of the world. The UN initiated the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in 2005 with the aim to reduce vulnerability of countries to natural disasters, which was later replaced by Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 for the duration of the next fifteen years. These frameworks, along with the Paris Agreement of 2015 and the Agenda 2030, have benefited many several countries as well as Switzerland, due to which Switzerland has reaffirmed its commitment to achieving their goals in the country's official statement for the 7th session of the GP2022.

As a global hub of philanthropy, the Swiss Confederation is willing to extend its hands towards the countries of Southeast Asia to help them tackle the crisis regarding floods and enhance their disaster management framework. Switzerland became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 2016, which strengthened the country's presence at the multilateral level in the Asia-Pacific region along its bilateral relations with the ASEAN member states. The four priority areas of fields of cooperation between Switzerland and ASEAN are human security, vocational education and training, climate change and social forestry, disaster management and risk reduction. The Swiss Confederation believes that by identifying the drawbacks of the current policies and system, ensuring international fraternity, acknowledging the eminence of various governmental and nongovernmental organizations and by working together under the guidance of different UN bodies under the light of the SDGs, Southeast Asian Countries will be relieved from this crisis and develop even more rapidly.

Reference(s):

- <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/foreign-policy/international-organizations/asean.html>
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- <https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/themes-sdc/disaster-reduction-relief-reconstruction/disaster-risk-reduction.html>
- <https://globalplatform.undrr.org/publication/switzerlands-official-statement-7th-session-global-platform-disaster-risk>
- https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/switzerland_extended_version.pdf